



Representative Louise M. Slaughter
Chairwoman, House Committee on Rules
Representing New York's 28th District

PRESS RELEASE

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Chairwoman Slaughter on Economic Stimulus Package: This "Will Go A Long Way To Help Create Jobs and Boost Our Economy"

Washington, DC - Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28) today issued the following statement as the House of Representatives considers a critical economic stimulus package:

"This week the crisis on Wall Street hit fever pitch, but families all over the country have been struggling to make ends meet for months," said Congresswoman Slaughter.

"This New Direction Congress has put together a solid stimulus package for Main Street. And while this legislation is just one step on the road to recovery, I am confident that it will go a long way to help create jobs and boost our economy."

Today the House is considering H.R. 7110, an economic stimulus package that will boost the economy, create jobs, and provide relief for struggling American families. Specifically, the package will address the following:

INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to have an immediate effect on the economy, investments are made in infrastructure projects that can start fast, meet existing needs, and create jobs. These projects provide short term benefit by putting people to work and buying goods, but leave behind long term infrastructure improvements that will benefit Americans for years to come.

Highway Infrastructure: \$12.8 billion, for our nation's aging highways and bridges, to improve safety and reduce traffic congestion.

Corps of Engineers: \$5 billion to invest in the nation's water resource infrastructure with improved flood protection, navigation and hydropower and to increase the efficiency of existing water infrastructure.

Fixing Crumbling Schools: \$3 billion to repair crumbling schools, provide students with first class technology, and to improve energy efficiency. One-third of public school buildings need extensive repair or total replacement and two-thirds have environmental problems unhealthy for children.

Clean Water: \$7.5 billion for drinking water and sewer projects including \$6.5 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and \$1 billion for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to repair, rehabilitate and expand water systems, many of which are over 50 years old and \$300 million for Bureau of Reclamation water projects, including \$98 million to provide clean, reliable drinking water to rural areas and \$126 million to ensure adequate water supply to western localities impacted by drought.

Transit: \$3.6 billion to purchase buses and equipment needed to expand public transportation and to make improvements to facilities and \$1 billion to meet growing demand for public transportation due to higher gas prices while reducing American gasoline consumption. Rising fuel costs have some transit agencies facing service reductions or fare increases.

Airport Improvement Grants: \$600 million for projects to improve safety and reduce delays at our nation's airports.

AMTRAK: \$500 million to make necessary upgrades to tracks and stations so that Amtrak can meet growing demand due to high gas prices. This year, ridership has increased by 8 percent on the Northeast Corridor and 13 percent on other corridor routes.

Public Housing: \$1 billion for repair and construction projects, including critical safety repairs. Every dollar of Capital Fund expenditures produces \$2.12 in economic return.

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ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Advanced Battery Technology Loans: \$1 billion to support \$3.3 billion in loans to encourage the manufacture of advanced vehicle batteries and battery systems - a key component to fuel efficient cars - in the United States.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: \$500 million to accelerate the development of technologies that will contribute to a reliable, domestic energy supply.

Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability: \$100 million to modernize the electric grid, make energy infrastructure more secure and reliable, and speed recovery from disruptions to the energy supply

ADRESSING NEEDS IN TOUGH TIMES

Extension of Unemployment Benefits: Provides an additional 7 weeks of extended benefits for workers who have exhausted regular unemployment compensation (20 total weeks). Workers in high unemployment states are eligible for an additional 13 weeks of benefits (33 total weeks). Extending unemployment benefits is one of the quickest, most cost-effective forms of economic stimulus because workers who have lost their paychecks spend benefits quickly.

Medicaid Assistance:□ Provides a temporary increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for Medicaid health costs, with increases from one to four percent. At a time of increasing enrollment, these funds will prevent cuts to health insurance and health care services for low-income children and families, as well as generate business activities, jobs, wages and State sales tax revenues that States would otherwise not see.

Food Assistance: \$2.6 billion to address rising food costs for seniors, people with disabilities and very poor families with children. This year, an average of 27.8 million individuals, and 12.5 million households, received food stamps.

Job Training: \$500 million to help Americans find and prepare for good jobs including \$400 million is for dislocated worker and youth employment activities and \$100 million to provide customized help to folks receiving unemployment benefits. Unemployment claims have increased by over 38% this year and 36% exhaust their benefits before finding work.

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